

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (11:15 a.m.)

from *A Declaration of Faith*

*The Bible is the written Word of God.*

*Led by the Spirit of God the people of Israel and the early church preserved and handed on the story of what God had said and done in their midst and how they had responded to him. These traditions were often shaped and reshaped by the uses to which the community put them. They were cherished, written down, and collected as the holy literature of the people of God. Through the inward witness of the same Spirit we acknowledge the authority of the Bible. We accept the Old and New Testaments as the canon, or authoritative standard of faith and life, to which no further writings need be added.*

*The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are necessary, sufficient, and reliable as witnesses to Jesus Christ, the living Word.*

*We must test any word that comes to us from church, world, or inner experience by the Word of God in Scripture.*

*We subject to its judgment all our understanding of doctrine and practice, including this Declaration of Faith.*

*We believe the Bible to be the Word of God as no other word written by human beings.*

*Relying on the Holy Spirit, who opens our eyes and hearts, we affirm our freedom to interpret Scripture responsibly.*

*God has chosen to address his inspired Word to us through diverse and varied human writings. Therefore we use the best available methods to understand them in their historical and cultural settings and the literary forms in which they are cast.*

*When we encounter apparent tensions and conflicts in what Scripture teaches us to believe and do, the final appeal must be to the authority of Christ.*

*Acknowledging that authority, comparing Scripture with Scripture, listening with respect to fellow believers past and present, we anticipate that the Holy Spirit will enable us to interpret faithfully God's Word for our time and place.*

From September 14, 2014